

D9.4 – Launch plan for the RAGE ecosystem authority

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AG	Applied Gaming
AOC	Articles of Constitution
B2B	Business to Business
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
DOA	Description of Action (part of H2020 Grant Agreement)
FTE	Full Time Employee
IP	Intellectual Property
IPR	Intellectual Property Right
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
PIC	Participant Identification Code
RF	RAGE Foundation
RIA	H2020 Research and Innovation Action
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SLA	Service Level Agreement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document provides guidance for launching and performing the initial operations of the RAGE Foundation (RF), legally established in October 2018 to serve as the RAGE Ecosystem Authority.

The document contains the proposal of lines of actions and specific activities to be undertaken by the RF to pursue its mission and, more specifically, to implement the successive stages of the RAGE Exploitation Plan. These proposals are to be discussed and agreed upon by the RF Board in its initial meetings, to be implemented as soon as it becomes feasible along the 2019-2021 period.

This full document has been discussed and approved in the final RAGE consortium meeting in Amsterdam, January 29, 2019. Given the nature and aims of this document, its priority 1 readers are the full members of the RF and especially its Board and Executive Committee.

Figure 1: RAGE Foundation logo



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Main content of the deliverable

As foreseen in the RAGE RIA DOA, this deliverable D9.4. contains the description of the plan to formally guide the initial activities of the organisation tasked with promoting, guiding and supervising the administration, operation and maintenance of the RAGE Ecosystem.

This Deliverable expands the pertinent aspects of the RAGE Go-to-market strategy described in D9.3 Final Exploitation Plan; namely those lines of action and activities to be immediately defined and implemented by the Board of the recently created RAGE Foundation (RF). Therefore, this roadmap complements and thus should be used in conjunction with D9.3.

This document contains the proposal of strategic lines of action to launch the ecosystem portal, the organisational structure and procedures of the RF and its main tasks and activities along the 2019-2021 period to fulfill the RF's foundational mission. These proposals will be further discussed, agreed upon and enforced for execution under the leadership of the Board of the RF.

This plan is intended to provide guidance, not a set format that must be rigidly followed, to define the commitments from the operational teams set-up by the RF to deliver the required readiness and awareness activities for a successful market deployment of the Ecosystem.

The report is structured along the following areas:

- Chapter 2 describes the main traits of the RF and its Articles of Constitution, which materialise the initial set of rules for governing the organisation.
- Chapter 3 describes the proposed launch plan for the RF, depicting the action lines and main activities to be undertaken by the RF in leading the roll-out of the ecosystem's go-to-market strategy.

1.2 Methodology

This Deliverable has been produced by the WP9 team, leveraging:

- the continuous support from the RAGE project's Executive Management and Strategic Management Boards
- the multiple contributions provided by all RAGE partners
- the recommendations provided by the EC Reviewers team
- Insights, data and qualitative information arising from
 - desk research and bibliographic analysis,
 - the continuous flow of findings, insights and validation feedback arising from the RAGE outreach, engagement and consultation rounds with gaming industry stakeholders and market players performed through WP7 and WP9, including preparation of external experts meetings, joint projects, invited talks, workshops, etc., and
 - specific endeavours such as searching for institutional support to leverage trans-border cooperation with hubs, incubators and industry associations launched in previous stages of the project.

2 THE RAGE FOUNDATION

2.1 Purpose and key traits

The RF was created as a **non-profit body under the law of The Netherlands** and registered in the Chamber of Commerce of Heerlen under the **legal name of Stichting RAGE** on October 22, 2018. Its operational name will be RAGE Foundation (RF).

As a non-profit organization any surplus revenues would be used to further achieve its foundational purpose, rather than distributing exceeding income to the participating entities or individuals as profit. Yet the organisation may charge membership fees and organise activities in return for payment where these are compatible with its purpose.

The RF has been created to serve as the RAGE Ecosystem Authority. By being the core of the Ecosystem's governance model the RF shall preserve and promote the RAGE RIA legacy after the ending of the project. It will replace the disappearing RAGE project and support the further growth of the gamecomponents.eu portal, its offerings and the associated stakeholder networks.

The RF has as its wider objective the provision of coherence, synergy and growth in the field of advanced IT and human-oriented computer use, by encouraging the transfer of technology in e-learning, e-health, gaming, simulations and other applications. The underlying rationale is to create beneficial conditions for using the opportunities offered by advanced IT (viz. games) in order to tackle social challenges in the field of education, healthcare, creative and manufacturing industries and wider contexts such as the labour market as a whole.

The RF aims to realise its objectives by having relevant stakeholders in the IT and digital media sectors come into contact with each other and by supporting the exploitation of a community portal (Ecosystem portal) focused on sharing and transferring advanced IT and knowledge.

In practical terms, the RF will have the **fundamental role to generate and sustain trust** among the customers (suppliers and consumers), members and allies of the Ecosystem, by providing legal continuity, strategic guidance and institutional stability to the whole environment for the Ecosystem operation.

2.2 Main activities

Legal continuity is a must and a fit-for-purpose structure, and decision-making processes will be instrumental to secure the long-term sustainability of the Ecosystem given the wide diversity of parties (and interests) needed to become involved in the operation. In this regard, RF activities would include e.g. publicity, dissemination, funding acquisition, operations, and exploitation/business development of the RAGE Ecosystem technology transfer offering.

The RF will develop strategic and tactical alliances both for pursuing its mission and support the business activities of the Ecosystem. This **supporting role** comprise:

- **Providing legal continuity, strategic guidance and stability to the entire operation**, by designing and establishing, under its own organisation or by outsourcing/subcontracting, the Ecosystem's Operator and adopting decisions on the legal framework for the technology transfer mechanism sustainability (IPR management, Business model, SLAs, etc),
- **Putting in place the temporary and permanent team in charge of the daily operations of the Ecosystem** ("The Operator"). This comprises: Identify candidates, select the one deemed as most convenient and establish the contractual relationship to transfer the operations aimed at growing the business value of the Ecosystem by marketing its products and services offering, but also by a proper acquisition and management of customers and suppliers and on the other hand, by running and maintaining the technical infrastructure and securing technical sustainability: the long-term provision of technical support and consultancy to facilitate the commercial and non-commercial exploitation of the RAGE offering.
- **Promoting and maintaining the dialogue with the relevant stakeholders and user communities** to understand their requirements and specific peculiarities and helping the Ecosystem Operator to define progress in the deployment and consolidation of the Ecosystem.
- **Protecting, promoting and supervising the Ecosystem operations** through monitoring and advising the Operator about the development, management and administration of the Ecosystem and its progress: providing expert advice in e.g. the implementation of strategies and services, secure interoperability across the Ecosystem offering, etc.
- **Establishing the necessary agreements with AG stakeholder institutions** (basically AG hubs and incubators) to deploy and consolidate a network of regional co-operation and co-ordination nodes in those areas where the AG is particularly concentrated. These nodes should become showrooms to facilitate quicker adoption, cooperation among local groups of studios, easier to deploy venues for technical meetings, hackathons and consortia seeding.
- **Promoting and setting-up specialised Working Groups or Committees in close coordination with institutional partners to address specific challenges** faced by the Gaming industry, e.g. professional and suppliers certification schemes, specific standards, registry in national procurement bodies, etc., to secure the "neutrality" of the Ecosystem on the one hand, and to generate payable services enhancing the attractiveness of the Ecosystem services on the other.
- **Maintaining continuous collaboration with Gaming industry associations**, to complement, expand and ultimately strengthen links among efforts in the scientific/academic fields with initiatives closer to the industry and to the European territories, e.g. joint events, cross-participation in governing bodies or lobbying, and ultimately to the demand of technological transfer to the games and gamification industries, to boost their innovation potential. In this regard, we are currently exploring the position of these associations to collaborate with the Ecosystem and even participate in the RF.

2.3. Formal details

The RF is officially registered as a legal entity under Dutch law (entity number 859284499) at the Chamber of Commerce of Heerlen, the Netherlands. Formal establishment of the Foundation was effected by the notary's office Simons in Voerendaal, the Netherlands, on October 22, 2018. Upon the launch of the Foundation, the Board of the Foundation is composed of two persons from the RAGE consortium: E. Kluijfhout (Secretary and Treasurer) and W. Westera (Chair). Procedures for assigning and replacing board members are covered by the Articles of Constitution (AOC). A certified English translation of the AOC has been distributed among the RAGE consortium partners. The official postal address of the RAGE Foundation is:

Jeustraet 53, 6367EV, Voerendaal, The Netherlands.

To enable future participation in European funding projects/proposals a Participant Identification Code (PIC) was created at the EC's Funding & Tenders Portal (<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>). The PIC of the RAGE Foundation is 903689637.

The AOC comply with a standardised Foundation format. Specifics are in the objective of the Foundation (cf. section 2.1) and its stakeholders.

The target group is specified as being comprised of knowledge suppliers (researchers), technology suppliers (software and component developers), games and gamification product developers (game studios and IT companies), intermediaries (*inter alia*, agencies, associations, publishers, entrepreneurs) and representatives of the end users (schools / teachers, universities, company trainers, hospitals), and end users (*inter alia*, students, parents, employers).

The RAGE Foundation distinguishes between three types of parties involved: Subscriber, Candidate Partner and Full Partner.

1. Subscriber. The simplest form of involvement with the RF is by subscribing to the objectives of the RF by way of signing a statement. Subscribers may be both private individuals and organisations. Subscribers may make use of the RF's basic services, for which a fee may be charged. Various services subscription levels are possible in this connection.
2. Candidate Partner. Candidate Partners sign an individual Memorandum of Understanding that lays down the relationship between the Candidate Partner and the RF, such as the relationship between a national IT or innovation hub and the RF when cooperating in developing software components. Entering into a Memorandum of Understanding requires the approval of the RF Board. Candidate Partners may become Full Partners. Candidate Partners can be both private individuals and organisations.
3. Full Partner. Full Partners may be represented in the RF Board. Representatives of the RAGE Consortium qualify as Full Partners. A Full Partner can be both a private individual and an organisation.

3 THE RF LAUNCH PLAN

3.1 RF Objectives for 2019-2021

The ultimate goal for the launching phase of the RF endeavour is to **undertake and exercise the leadership of the Ecosystem operations**, replacing the RAGE consortium after the RIA project is completed. Progress towards meeting this goal will be measured through the progress in achieving the following 4 operational objectives:

- A. Set into motion the RF organisation, draw-up the needed regulations and establish its planning/decision making workflows and operational/business procedures.
- B. Acquire financial and material resources and political/institutional support needed to build-up a successful Ecosystem operation.
- C. Complete the final RAGE Exploitation Plan's Stage 1, execute the entire Stage 2 and launch Stage 3 (cf. D9.3).
- D. Pursue the identification, selection and appointment of the permanent Ecosystem Operator.

3.2 Preparatory measures

Along the last year of the project, the RAGE Consortium designed and executed a series of activities in preparation of the actual launch of the RF and the Ecosystem. These were grouped under the so-called Stage 1 of the RAGE Exploitation Plan. Main achievements in this preparatory phase include:

- Legal establishment of the RF, as described in chapter 2
- Launch the basic (MVE) services offering of the Ecosystem and opening them to external users via the gamecomponents.eu portal, resulting in a growing number of visitors to the ecosystem portal and downloads of components
- Wide range of contact, consultation and feedback gathering with Ecosystem potential suppliers and consumers and initial discussions with institutional allies. These took place through 60 public events with some 15,400 participants (excluding Gamescom as a major fair - with 32000 participants) among which 9 technical events gathering 450 participants, mainly developers from at least 6 different countries, as well as highly specialised events such as the RAGE consortium meeting 70+ Dutch games industry players in the RAGE/DGA/SAGANET event, the ICT2018 (+35 technology creators participating in RAGE networking session) or the 3 day presence of RAGE at the European Parliament (introducing RAGE to Parliament members). This progress has been complemented with a strong growth of our online channels, both the project website and social media as well as a successful launching and growth rates of the Ecosystem portal.

All in all, these preparatory actions rendered lessons and additional insights to improve Stages 2 and 3 of the Exploitation Plan and refine the design of action lines and tasks included in Stages 2 and 3.

3.3 Funding/financing

Various parties from the RAGE consortium have expressed their ambition and readiness to prolong their active involvement in the RF even in the absence of

funding. While the portal's exploitation model described in D9.3 anticipates an incubation period of at least 3-years to arrive at a commercially viable, discussions made clear that the risk that such voluntary efforts will gradually be fading is substantial. In order to secure continuity, external funding for the Foundation's activities is deemed a necessity. Such funding should be obtained within the next 12 months. Various efforts to achieve this have been made already. As a first effort, an ICT-32-2017 innovation action proposal was submitted, including game incubator hubs from Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands, but did not make it. Most recently, a proposal featuring the RF is under preparation for submission to the Fast Track to Innovation 2019 calls of the European Innovation Council pilot in Horizon2020, due on February, May and October 2019. Should the co-funding request be approved, the RF will work together with parties from the RAGE consortium and beyond in the acceleration in scaling-up and consolidating the Ecosystem's presence in the market.

3.4 Strategic lines of action

The RF's strategy to progress towards the Operational Objectives of the Launch Plan is structured in four lines of action:

- Action Line 1: Organisational development
 - 1a Setting up internal processes of the RAGE Foundation
 - 1b Setting up the exploitation of the Ecosystem portal
- Action Line 2: Partnerships
 - 2a Engage with industry stakeholders
 - 2b Acquire financial resources
- Action Line 3: Ecosystem portal's offering development
 - 3a Run, maintain and extend the gamecomponents.eu portal
 - 3b Upgrade the Portal offering
 - 3c Events and face-to-face related offerings
- Action Line 4: Market development
 - 4a Market research
 - 4b Direct marketing

Action Lines 1 and 2 are mainly oriented towards the proper launching and operation of the RF as Ecosystem authority, while action lines 3 & 4 are related to the further development of the ecosystem towards facilitating its transference to the commercial operator.

Each line of action includes tasks to be performed to fulfil specific goals, i.e.:

- Set in place viable organisational and operational mechanisms to run the Ecosystem
- Promote the vision of the RAGE Ecosystem
- Continuously test and validate the market potential and the unmet needs of our targeted customer groups
- Expand and consolidate the portfolio of products and services offered through the Ecosystem
- Recruit components suppliers and earliest consumers.

As already described in the Exploitation Plan, build-up and consolidation of the Ecosystem will be based on the continuity of efforts launched within the project,

to be performed by an open partnership through the RF, including RAGE partners and other AG research community and market stakeholders. In this regard, decisions are to be made by the RF Board and implemented with the contribution and operational leadership of RF (full) members

3.5 Management and Working groups

To organise its activities the RAGE Foundation has established 4 working groups covering the 4 action lines. Proposed assignment of responsibilities read as follows:

- Action Line 1: Organisational development
Lead/coordinated by: OUNL
- Action Line 2: Partnerships
Lead/coordinated by: OUNL
- Action Line 3: Ecosystem's offering development
Lead/coordinated by: FTK
- Action Line 4: Market development
Lead/coordinated by: INMARK

As of January 31st, 2019, personal commitments to support and contribute to the RAGE Foundation have been obtained from most key persons in RAGE: Wim Westera (OUNL), Eric Kluijfhout (OUNL), Rui Prada (INESC ID), Pedro Santos (INESC ID), Kam Star (Playgen), Matthias Hemmje (FTK), Dominic Heutelbeck (FTK), Paul Hollins (UOB), Rubén Riestra (INMARK), Baltasar Martinez Manjón (UCM), Andrea Molinari (Okkam), Ana Romano (EPJ), Johan Jeuring (UU), Mihai Dascalu (UPB), Thierry Platon (BipMedia), Krassen Stefanov (SU), and Sarah Driver (HCG).

It is our ambition to gradually extend the number of participants by involving external parties. The 4 leaders of action lines, will constitute the executive committee of the RF, coordinating the actions. The executive committee will confer on a monthly basis (online) to discuss actions and progress.

3.6 2019 Activity plan

Planning of 2019 activities includes two separate scenarios that differ in their co-funding (by third parties) conditions: 1) non-co-funded work and 2) co-funded work. In case of failing funds, the work in the RF will be carried on a voluntary basis. Activities will be driven by personal ambitions and persistent commitments of parties. Voluntary efforts may be motivated by either idealist considerations or the conviction that early investments will pay off at a later stage. To this end, we have identified a minimal set of activities, feasible for supporting the Foundation. In the co-funded work scenario, more budget and resources will be available, which will allow for dedicated and intensified efforts that will accelerate the growth of the AG community building. Table 1 below shows the proposed activity plan of the non-funded work scenario to be discussed and agreed upon by the RF Board, including parties/persons involved. In the funded work scenario, the minimum set of activities will be extended: extensive work packages will cover, detail and allocate the actions listed in the exploitation plan deliverable D9.3, while considering the funding conditions and requirements. Here, the RAGE Foundation will act as an AG networking party involving partners from the RAGE

Foundation and beyond to arrange the work. Parties that have opted for voluntary work could then be the first to be hired.

Table 1: Priority activities 2019 in the non-funded minimum scenario.

<i>Activities</i>		<i>Target</i>	<i>Parties</i>
Action line 1 Organisational development			OUNL
1a internal RF processes			
	Board meetings	4x in 2019	OUNL
	Executive committee	Bimonthly	OUNL
	Administrative workflows and procedures	Basic	OUNL
	Industry led External Advisory Board	June 2019	Playgen, OUB, BIP, OKK
	Setting up management of financial administration (e.g. funding/revenues)	Synchronise with funding	OUNL, FTK
1b Setting up the exploitation of the Ecosystem portal			
	Coordination of portal exploitation: technical, content, marketing, quality assurance		FTK, INMARK, SU INESC ID
	Finetuning of legal terms and conditions		FTK, INMARK
	Preserving GDPR compliancy		FTK
Action line 2: Partnerships			OUNL
2a Engage with industry stakeholders			
	Arrange focus group session	2 Sessions	INESC ID, UOB, ...
	Extend co-operation with game hubs and game associations Identify win-win.	2 MoUs	OUNL, BIP, UCM, PLAYGEN, INESC ID, SU, OUB, UPB
2b Acquire financial resources			
	Systematic participation in Call for Proposals issued by industry/innovation fostering programmes (H2020 and alike)	2x	INMARK, OUNL, FTK, UU, INESC ID, ...
Action Line 3: Ecosystem portal's offering development			FTK

3a Run, maintain and extend the gamecomponents.eu portal (conditional licensing model)			
	Hosting/maintenance	SLA standard	FTK, SU
	Set into motion the e-commerce and CRM functionalities		FTK
	User feedbacks		FTK
	Changes and version management		FTK, SU
	Software quality analysis		OUNL
	Traffic data analysis		FTK
3b Upgrade the Portal offering			
	Acquire third party game software/components	10x	INESC ID, UPB, UU, ...
	Build-up the non-components online offering (interactive maps, advice, training, etc.); elaborate freemium/premium services	2 new services	UOB, UPB, UU, FTK
3c Events and face-to-face related offerings			
	Workshops	1	Playgen, INESC-ID UPB, EPJ, UCM, UU
	Industry meetups	1	OUNL, UU, INESC ID, SU, HCG, OKK, UCM
	Hackathon	1	INESC ID, Playgen
Action Line 4: Market development			INMARK
4a Market research			
	Update and maintenance of prospects databases	+100 parties identified	INMARK
	Identify additional game hubs and incubators (cf. 2a)	+4 entities	INMARK, OUNL, BIP
	Identify item suppliers (cf. 3b)	+10 parties	INMARK
4b Direct marketing			
	Best practices show cases	2	BIP, HCG, UOB, Playgen, EPJ, OKK, UPB, UU, INESC ID
	Direct marketing to software suppliers	6 campaigns	INMARK

	Direct marketing to training suppliers	1 campaign	INMARK
	Direct marketing to users	6 campaigns	INMARK
	Direct marketing to Ecosystem events participants (cf. 3c)	4 campaigns	INMARK

A main assumption is that the extra efforts needed for work proposed can remain limited by seeking combinations with other duties of the people involved. The above set of actions is regarded a minimum effort, which keeps the RAGE legacy alive and would even allow for modest growth. Obviously, with additional funding the power would be substantially higher, allowing for intensified community building activities, dedicated efforts in workflow design and quality, specifying the Terms of Reference to identify, select and appoint the Ecosystem Operator, or to launching an annual Ecosystem event including RAGE Awards, which now are all simmering. Therefore, funding acquisition has been assigned highest priority, with an FTI proposal to be submitted in February 2019, and likely followed by other similar actions aiming at H2020 but also regional/national funding schemes.

Under the scenario of actually acquiring relevant third-party co-financing from H2020, Structural Funds and/or regional funding agencies, the proposed plan is to accelerate the development of the ecosystem, mainly through a wider portfolio of activities and a more intensive programme for recruiting customers and allies. Among these, the following are deemed as showing higher impact potential:

- **Widening the scope of potential suppliers I:** This covers additional efforts to recruit technology components suppliers emerging from a wider H2020 projects base. During the last months of the RAGE project, WP9 team has identified (mainly through EC databases) 4.231 ongoing or recently completed projects rendering technology breakthroughs in a variety of technologies recognised as potentially useful for accelerating innovation in AG development. These include: 3D Graphics, AR, VR, AI, Robotics, AC, NLP, IOT, HCI and Secure communications, among other things.
- **Widening the scope of potential suppliers II:** This action will be aimed at recruiting technology providers not directly linked to the AG space or to RTD projects but potentially interested in proving components usable in AG development. This opportunity became visible during the wider interaction with technology groups and companies across the Marketing Action Plan events and helped us to identify promising groups dealing with different technology sources.
- **Engaging with the pan-European network of National Coalitions for Digital Skills and Jobs.** This network of 23 national coalitions represent the major transnational co-operation effort to address the growing Digital Skills gap problem. Initial contacts with this network have rendered very promising results regarding the potential of AG solutions test-pilots under RAGE. Collaboration with these initiatives will foster on the one hand showcasing the value of AG to be “as part of the solution” for the malfunctioning of the EU labour market, and thus triggering demand

traction for AG studios. And on the other hand, it will empower collaboration among AG clusters.

In practical terms, as shown in Table 2, these recruitment and engagement activities in the co-funding scenario will be executed mainly by expanding/intensifying the portfolio of outreach channels and vehicles included in Action Lines 2,3 and 4 and already deployed and tested during the last semester of the project (under the Stage Marketing Action Plan) and will include:

- Targeted events, interactive dissemination events where the Ecosystem offering will be showcased, e.g. game jams, hackathons or plug fests, and networking with participants coming from the targeted stakeholders' groups
- Direct Marketing based on previously identified prospect customers data
- Organic marketing via the RAGE Ecosystem portal.

Table 2: Priority activities 2019 in the third party co-funded scenario.

<i>Activities</i>		<i>Target</i>	<i>Parties</i>
Action line 2: Partnerships			OUNL
2a Engage with industry stakeholders			
	Arrange focus group session	5 Sessions	INESC ID , UOB, ...
	Extend co-operation with game hubs and game associations Identify win-win.	6 MoUs	OUNL , BIP, PLAYGEN, INESC ID, SU, OUB, UPB
Action Line 3: Ecosystem portal's offering development			FTK
3b Upgrade the Portal offering			
	Acquire third party game software/components	20x	INESC ID , UPB, UU, ...
	Build-up the non-components online offering (interactive maps, advice, training, etc.); elaborate freemium/premium services	3 new services	UOB , UPB, UU, FTK
3c Events and face-to-face related offerings			
	Workshops	3	Playgen , INESC-ID UPB, UCM, UU
	Industry meetups	3	OUNL , UU, INESC ID, OKK, SU, HCG
	Hackathon	4	INESC ID ,

			Playgen
Action Line 4: Market development			INMARK
4a Market research			
	Update and maintenance of prospects databases	+200 parties identified	INMARK
	Identify additional game hubs and incubators (cf. 2a)	+10 entities	INMARK, OUNL, BIP
	Identify item suppliers (cf. 3b)	+20 parties	INMARK
4b Direct marketing			
	Best practices show cases	3	BIP, HCG, UOB, Playgen, EPJ, OKK, UPB, UU, INESC ID
	Direct marketing to software suppliers	6 campaigns	INMARK
	Direct marketing to training suppliers	2 campaigns	INMARK
	Direct marketing to users	12 campaigns	INMARK
	Direct marketing to Ecosystem events participants (cf. 3c)	8 campaigns	INMARK